

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA  
NSC WASHDC

S E C R E T GUATEMALA 5354

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PEPR, OAS, NU, VE, CS, GT  
SUBJ: GUATEMALAN POSITION ON NICARAGUA

1. SUMMARY. GUATEMALAN FOREIGN MINISTER CASTILLO VALDEZ TOOK UNAMBIGUOUSLY NEGATIVE VIEW OF COSTA RICA INITIATIVE IN REVIEW OF NICARAGUAN SITUATION WITH ME TODAY (SEPT 11). HE SAID THAT HE HAD INFORMED COSTA RICAN GOVERNMENT THAT GUATEMALA WOULD NOT SEND AN EMISSARY TO NICARAGUA, AND SAID HE HAD ALSO BEEN INFORMED BY SALVADORAN FOREIGN MINISTER THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE SENDING ONE EITHER. HE WAS NOT INTERESTED IN TAKING LEAD TO SEEK POSTPONEMENT OF OAS SESSION SEPT 12, STATING THAT THEY WERE NOT CONCERNED WHEN THIS MEETING WAS HELD. HE FELT VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE WAS BAD, AND SAID GUATEMALA WOULD VOTE AGAINST IT. END SUMMARY.

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2. FOLLOWING MY DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENT AND VICE FOREIGN MINISTER AT THE END OF LAST WEEK ON NICARAGUA, I MET THIS MORNING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CASTILLO VALDEZ WHO HAD NOT BEEN AVAILABLE AT THE END OF THE WEEK. IN SHARP CONTRAST TO POSITIVE BRIEFING GIVEN ME BY VICE PRESIDENT (GUATEMALA 5336), FOREIGN MINISTER WAS NEGATIVE ON ALMOST ALL COUNTS AND APPEARED TO BE REFLECTING MORE THE CONSERVATIVE VIEW GIVEN US

BY PRESIDENT LUCAS ABOUT WHAT CAN USEFULLY BE DONE IN NICARAGUA. HE SAID COSTA RICAN FOREIGN MINISTER HAD MADE THREE POINTS IN HIS PRESENTATION HERE: 1) TO EXPRESS GRAVE CONCERN ABOUT NICARAGUAN EVENTS, WHICH GUATEMALA OBVIOUSLY SHARED; 2) TO PROPOSE A MEETING OF CENTRAL AMERICAN PRESIDENTS, WHICH GUATEMALA DID NOT THINK APPROPRIATE; AND 3) TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF OFFERING SOMOZA A "SILVER BRIDGE," AN IDEA WHICH WOULD BE MOST DIFFICULT TO PRESENT TO SOMOZA AND SMACKED OF INTERVENTION.

3. HE SAID THERE HAD ALSO BEEN SOME DISCUSSION OF VILLAGRAN KRAMER'S IDEA OF SENDING EX-PRESIDENTS AS EMISSARIES, AND HE THOUGHT THIS WAS A PARTICULARLY BAD IDEA. FOR ONE THING, NONE OF THE FORMER PRESIDENTS WOULD WANT TO UNDERTAKE SUCH A MISSION. HE SAID THAT, FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF THE COSTA RICAN VISIT WITH PRESIDENT LUCAS, HE HAD INFORMED COSTA RICAN EMBASSY ON FRIDAY EVENING THAT GUATEMALA WOULD NOT BE SENDING AN EMISSARY TO NICARAGUA. HE HAD ALSO MET WITH THE SALVADORAN FOREIGN MINISTER AT THE AIRPORT HERE (WHILE THE SALVADORAN FONMIN WAS IN TRANSIT) AND HAD LEARNED FROM HIM THAT SALVADOR WAS ALSO OPPOSED TO THE IDEA OF SENDING AN EMISSARY. COSTA RICA, HE SAID, HAD ADVISED THAT THEY WOULD BE SENDING A REPRESENTATIVE AND HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT HONDURAS WOULD DO.

4. WITH RESPECT TO THE OAS MEETING SCHEDULED SEPT 12, FONMIN SAID GOG HAD NO INTEREST IN SEEKING POSTPONEMENT AS THEY WERE  
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NOT CONCERNED WHEN THIS MEETING MIGHT BE HELD. THEY THOUGHT THE VENEZUELAN INITIATIVE WAS A BAD ONE, AND THEY WOULD VOTE AGAINST IT WHENEVER IT CAME UP. IF ANYONE SHOULD SEEK POSTPONEMENT, IT SHOULD LOGICALLY BE VENEZUELA OR POSSIBLY COSTA RICA.

5. I REVIEWED WITH FONMIN THE POSITION THAT WE HAD TAKEN IN WELCOMING COSTA RICAN INITIATIVE AND DREW ON STATE 229146 TO PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT CURRENT STATUS. WHEN I TOLD HIM ABOUT REACTIONS FROM NICARAGUAN OFFICIALS (SEE PARA 3, STATE 229146) FONMIN SAID HE HAD ALREADY BEEN INFORMED FROM OTHER SOURCES ABOUT NICARAGUA'S ATTITUDE.

6. FONMIN EMPHASIZED THROUGHOUT THE CONVERSATION HIS VIEW THAT THE COSTA RICAN INITIATIVE RAN RISKS OF INTERVENTION IN NICARAGUA'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS, WHICH GUATEMALA WAS TRYING TO AVOID. HE SAID PRESIDENT LUCAS WAS INTENT ON CONCENTRATING ON GUATEMALA'S OWN PROBLEMS AND WAS NOT TEMPTED TO MEDDLE IN NICARAGUA'S. HE DESCRIBED BOTH VENEZUELA'S INITIATIVE IN OAS AND COSTA RICAN IDEA OF MEDIATION AS LACKING A PROPER LEGAL BASIS. HE SAID WE SHOULD NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE FACT THAT WE ARE DEALING IN NICARAGUA WITH "A WHOLE ESTABLISHMENT," NOT JUST ONE MAN. SOMOZA WAS THE NAME WE GAVE TO IT BUT WE WERE IN FACT DEALING

WITH A WHOLE INSTITUTION, THE PRESENT ALTERNATIVE TO WHICH WAS ONLY A GOVERNMENT OF THE EXTREME LEFT. HE MENTIONED TWICE THE ANALOGY HE FELT EXISTED BETWEEN THE PRESENT SITUATION IN NICARAGUA AND THE EARLIER EVENTS IN CUBA WHEN EFFORTS TO GET RID OF BATISTA LED TO CASTRO.

7. COMMENT. APART FROM GUATEMALA'S DISTINCT LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR COOPERATING IN CURRENT EFFORTS TO PROMOTE CENTRAL AMERICAN MEDIATION, ONE OF THE SAD ASPECTS REVEALED IN TODAY'S CONVERSATION IS GLARING LACK OF COHESION OR EVEN COORDINATION IN GOG. IT TURNS OUT THAT ALMOST AT PRECISE MOMENT THAT VICE PRESIDENT WAS SUMMONING ME FRIDAY TO TELL US THAT PRESIDENT HAD AUTHORIZED HIM TO EXPLORE IDEA OF SENDING EX-PRESIDENTIAL EMISSARIES TO NICARAGUA, FOREIGN MINISTER WAS INFORMING COSTA RICA THAT  
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GUATEMALA HAD DECIDED NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN DESPATCH OF EMISSARIES.  
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## Message Attributes

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